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ABSTRACT

This report presents the views and experiences of 11 individuals from Nebraska's higher education community and a Federal official on the topic of bigotry and violence on the state's college campuses. Views were expressed at a forum held in Lincoln, Nebraska in May 1989. One of the faculty argued that society needs to learn how to communicate about bigotry and racism. Several participants suggested that universities need a safe office where students can report bias-motivated incidents. Students from different ethnic groups mentioned the difficulties of getting through college studies without a strong support system, particularly on a campus where numbers of minority students are low. College administrators described the different programs, resources, and scholarship monies available for the recruitment and retention of minority students and efforts to recruit minority faculty. According to the presentations, there is important work that needs to be done at all levels of higher education, both two-year and four-year institutions, to improve intergroup relations in order to minimize bigotry, racism, and violence in Nebraska's college campuses. (JB)

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BIGOTRY AND VIOLENCE ON NEBRASKA'S COLLEGE CAMPUSES

NEBRASKA ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

This summary report of the Nebraska Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights was prepared for the information and consideration of the Commission. Statements and viewpoints in the report should not be attributed to the Commission or to the Advisory Committee, but only to individual participants in the community forum where the information was gathered.

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A SUMMARY REPORT

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APRIL 1990

BIGOTRY AND VIOLENCE ON NEBRASKA'S COLLEGE CAMPUSES

NEBRASKA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE UNITED STATES

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

APRIL 1990

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The United States Commission on Civil Rights, created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957 and reestablished by the United States Commission on Civil Rights Act of 1983, is an independent, bipartisan agency of the Federal Government. By the terms of the Act, the Commission is charged with the following duties pertaining to discrimination or denials of equal protection based on race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin, or in the administration of justice: investigation of individual with respect to discrimination or denials of equal protection; the appraisal of the laws and policies of the United States with respect to discrimination or denials of equal protection; the maintenance of a national clearinghouse for information respecting discrimination or denials of equal protection; and the investigation of patterns or practices of fraud or discrimination in the conduct of Federal elections. The Commission is also required to submit reports to the President and the Congress at such times as the Commission, the Congress, or the President shall deem desirable.

THE STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

An Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights has been established in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia pursuant to section 105(c) of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 and section 6(c) of the United States Commission on Civil Rights Act of 1983. The Advisory Committees are made up of responsible persons who serve without compensation. Their functions under their mandate from the Commission are to advise the Commission of all relevant information concerning their respective States on matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission; advise the Commission on matters of mutual concern in the preparation of reports of the Commission to the President and the Congress; receive reports, suggestions, and recommendations from individuals, public and private organizations, and public officials upon matters pertinent to inquiries conducted by the State Advisory Committee; initiate and forward advice and recommendations to the Commission upon matters in which the Commission shall request the assistance of the State Advisory Committee; and attend, as observers, any open hearing or conference which the Commission may hold within the State.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Nebraska Advisory Committee to the
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
April 1990

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

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Attached is a report on a community forum held by the Nebraska Advisory Committee in Lincoln on May 24, 1989, to obtain information identifying issues, developments and efforts to improve problems concerning bigotry-related violence on college campuses in Nebraska. The Committee heard from two consultants, a counselor, four students and four college administrators. Although the report does not reflect an exhaustive analysis on the subject, the Committee hopes the Commission will find it of value in its monitoring of bigotry and violence across the nation.

The Advisory Committee voted 11 to 0 to approve and submit this report to the Commissioners.

Respectfully,

/s/

Gary Hill, Chairperson
Nebraska Advisory Committee

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Acknowledgments: The Nebraska Advisory Committee wishes to thank the staff of the Commission's Central Regional Division for its help in the preparation of this summary report. The summary report was the principal assignment of Ascension Hernandez, with support from Corrine Sanders. The report was completed under the overall supervision of Melvin L. Jenkins, Director of the Commission's Central Regional Division.

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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has expressed a deep concern for crimes motivated by bigotry and has played a leading role in calling for the enactment of legislation requiring the establishment of a national system to collect data on such crimes.

In July 1988 the Commission passed a resolution encouraging its State Advisory Committees to review the subject of bias-related violence, especially on college campuses, as part of their broader inquiries into hate crimes. In response to this the Nebraska Advisory Committee voted to undertake a review of racial and religious tension on selected Nebraska college campuses. The Nebraska Advisory Committee became one of 4 States in the Central Regional Division to conduct a forum on this important subject in order to brief the Commissioners.[1]

On May 24, 1989, the Nebraska Advisory Committee invited college administrators, college students and those interested in the topic to share information concerning the rise of racial and religious tension. This report summarizes the principal points

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[1] The other States to conduct forums on bigotry and violence and issues reports are: Bigotry and Violence in Illinois, Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, (May 1988); Bigotry and Violence in Minnesota, Minnesota Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, (October 1989); Bigotry and Violence on Missouri College Campuses, Missouri Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, (April 1990).

made at the forum in Lincoln, Nebraska.[2]

OVERVIEW

Dr. Jack Kay, Chair, Speech Department, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jack Kay, a professor of speech communication at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), became interested in the subject of bigotry and violence through a research project 6 years ago. He said that his research activities have taken him into a world envisioned by members of the contemporary white supremacy movement, a world that embraces hate, bigotry, suspicion, and violence.

Dr. Kay mentioned that many academicians have developed theories on racism and have developed methods to correct racism. He was concerned that only a few academics and policymakers have focused attention on the communicative dimensions of racism and bigotry. Dr. Kay told the Nebraska Advisory Committee that society recognized racism and bigotry and knows that it is wrong that many do not know how to communicate about racism and bigotry. He noted that people generally avoid talking about racism, hoping the problem will go away; others claim racial incidents are isolated and the product of a handful of sick, twisted individuals. Dr. Kay related that society must devote more effort to examining the communicative aspects of racism and

[2] All information contained in this report was taken from a forum held by the Nebraska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on May 24, 1989, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

bigotry. In addition he believes a better understanding is needed, nationally, on how elected leaders communicate about racism. He said that there should be a study on how media coverage of hate groups and racial incidents affect the national conscience. Further, he pointed out, that colleges and universities need to determine how to communicate about racism. Dr. Kay related that persons need to know how to deal with others who use racist language or actions. In effect, he believed a comprehensive study of the communicative dimensions of racism and bigotry is necessary as one of the strategies to fight this problem.

Dr. Kay asserted that academia's lack of attention to the communicative dimension of fighting racism stands in sharp contrast to the devotion and serious attention given by leaders of organized hate groups to studying and developing communication strategies designed to secure press coverage, to gain converts, and to solicit donations. He reported that some hate groups have been particularly effective in designing persuasive strategies to entice young persons into the movement. They focus on communication channels such as music, comics, and computer bulletin boards. Dr. Kay insisted that the skillful communication of supremacist recruiters is to a large degree responsible for the rapid growth of the skinhead movement during the past several years.

Although, Dr. Kay's review of national literature supports the notion that there has been an increase in racist and anti-

Semitic incidents on college campuses, he has not conducted a systematic study of racism and violence specific to Nebraska's colleges and universities. However he reported that students at UNL, at Kearney State College, and at Creighton have told him of racist literature distributed by the Aryan Youth Movement/White Student Union. He said that a skinhead recruiter visited with high school and college students in the cities of Lincoln and Omaha.

Dr. Kay gave some credit to the administrators' efforts at UNL to promote multicultural diversity in fighting racism and bigotry. Dr. Kay related to the Advisory Committee that some students at UNL reported incidents of racial harassment to him but those students did not feel comfortable in filing formal complaints with the school's affirmative action office. He said those students expressed a feeling that they did not want to turn the matter into a big deal and get more trouble out of the situation. He believed UNL should promote a better atmosphere, a place where students can feel they can report problems of harassment, based on sex, race and religion. He said that bias-motivated incidents on campus reflect negatively on colleges and universities across the nation and this makes it difficult to attract students if the institution has an image of being racist.

COUNSELOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Marcie Metzger, Interpersonal Violence Coordinator, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Marcie Metzger, a counselor with 4 years work experience

with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) residence halls, asked the campus security advisory committee to look at bias-related incidents on campus.[3] In response to her request Ms. Metzger reported that the campus security advisory committee conducted a student forum with representatives from many student organizations, over 10 including the American Minority Council, the African People's Union and the Gay Task Force. The forum also included those individuals interested in promoting a better campus environment and was attended by well over a 100 students. The purpose of the forum was to ascertain from the students their experiences in racial incidents.

Ms. Metzger related to the Nebraska Advisory Committee that when she first approached some students to attend the forum, some retorted, "I don't know that I can describe racist incidents that are happening to me."[4] She reported that others would say, "I am afraid"[5] or "I have examples of isolated incidents and those isolated incidents that happened to me really were not that important."[6] Ms. Metzger stated that many students know what the formal complaint reporting network is but choose not to use it

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[3] In 1984 the Advisory Committee had surveyed sexual aggression and sexual harassment but found that very few students were identified as race victims.

[4] Quotes provided by Marcie Metzger, Interpersonal Violence Coordinator, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, at a forum conducted by the Nebraska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, May 24, 1989 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

for various reasons.

Ms. Metzger reported that many of the 100 students that attended the forum related incidents of verbal harassment, incidents in the classroom, physical threats and exclusion from groups within the residence halls. She related that it became very clear during the course of the forum that students wanted to continue to discuss these types of incidents. She indicated that future forums to allow students to discuss racial and religious tension were being planned.

Ms. Metzger said that in her opinion UNL has done much throughout the years in an attempt to address some of the problems related by the students. However she indicated that there is no dialogue between the students, maybe out of fear or isolation. She felt that the students need to look at what is happening in their own personal lives and to minimize that in terms of their treatment of other students.

Finally, Ms. Metzger related to the Nebraska Advisory Committee that the university does not have a formal system of compiling statistics on racial or religious incidents. However, she reported that the university has established a biased related task force. Further, she said, that a committee will be established to follow-up on the student forum (discussed earlier), and to have a public forum on campus.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Elizabeth Millar, former Graduate Student, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Elizabeth Millar, a former graduate student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) described to the Nebraska Advisory Committee events that led to a bias-motivated incident. She was interviewed by a local newspaper reporter regarding diversity on the campus. A story appeared in the newspaper the next day concerning Ms. Millar's views. She told the Advisory Committee that while eating lunch in the institution's cafeteria a [white] female approached her and said that she did not like her. Ms. Millar related that she continued to eat and the [white] female repeated the statement several times. Finally Ms. Millar said that she told the person "okay, thanks." Ms. Millar said to the Advisory Committee that when she responded to the person, the person then hit her across the head. Ms. Millar reported the incident to the cafeteria manager and the person was questioned by the police. She reported to the Committee that she did not know the disposition of the matter. Ms. Millar related to the Committee several other incidents motivated by race that she was involved in at UNL. In particular she said that due to one absence from a class her instructor wanted a medical excuse. She said other students were not asked to provide an excuse when absent from class.

Regarding her experience at UNL, Ms. Millar related to the Committee that the university is attempting to address the problem of racial and religious motivated incidents through cultural diversity workshops. However she told the Committee that workshops should be given for all employees of the

university. All too often, she said, employees are hired from small towns in Nebraska and perhaps the only minority some have seen were those on television. Further she said that the university must have follow-up activities after the workshop.

Marcella Gilbert, Native American Student, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Marcella Gilbert, a Native American student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), stated to the Advisory Committee that there is racism on campus toward Native Americans, which has the smallest number of students among multiracial groups on campus. She believes most of the racist behavior by the majority of the white student population is based on stereotypes that persons have been conditioned to, without really knowing the consequences of their actions on the Native American victim. The racism toward Native Americans on campus is based on lack of knowledge of Indian people, of the Indian life style, hence, many white persons do not know how to approach the Native American student on campus. Ms. Gilbert added that the racism comes not only from students but from the faculty. She said that for the Native American to confront the perpetrator of a racist act, which might be an instructor, or another student in the class, is tantamount to taking on the entire class because the white students and the professors are in the majority, so there is an intimidation aspect involved in the incident.

Ms. Gilbert mentioned how the Greek (fraternity/sorority) system downgrades people of color on campus; she noted an

incident in which a Greek fraternity conducted a survey and circulated a petition to allow liquor in a fraternity house. The Greeks marked the petition to indicate that they were Indians, hence, the chances to get the petition approved would be better. She said that this attempt to make a joke of a group of people was not funny but a serious, racist behavior.

Ms. Gilbert thought it was ironic that there is a big push by the university to get people of color on campus but at the same time the university's administration does not know what to do with its minority students in terms of retention. The administration has not been able to help or to convince the Native Americans to remain on campus and to complete their studies. Ms. Gilbert reiterated that racism on campus is not blatant, but is covert.

The American Minority Council (AMC), a student organization of which Ms. Gilbert is the Native American chair, is one of the few support systems available to the Native American students who remain at the UNL campus. She said UNL is not a school to which many Native Americans are attracted to for educational purposes; she believes that the faculty and the persons who can influence students should be sensitized to the specific needs of Native Americans as the university develops programs to support people of color on campus.

Dora Olivarez-Bahr, President, DREAM Organization, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Dora Olivarez-Bahr is president of Developing Realistic

Educational Activities for Minorities (DREAM) and vice-president of the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), two student organizations at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). Ms. Bahr believed that racially motivated incidents on campus are very subtle and that students do not complaint and probably do not know where to report the incidents. She knew that ethnic minorities informally discuss the incidents among their respective organizations or with counselors but seldom use formal channels for complaints. She said that the path of least resistance is followed by minority students because the institutional procedures and responses can be complex barriers that frustrate the individual student. It is her opinion that it is easier for the student to be silent on a serious matter; it is easier to get along than to confront. According to Ms. Bahr, the small number of minority students makes it difficult to survive without having to explain your cultural differences to instructors, for example: Where were you born? Where were your parents born? She was asked these questions in almost every class by instructors and students, as were other Chicano students. Ms. Bahr, a Chicana, is a fourth-generation native of Nebraska. The seriousness of these subtle incidents by instructors is reflected when their insensitivity to the ethnic minority student's culture is acquired by the white students in a reinforcing continuous process, she said.

Ms. Bahr believed there is lack of interest by the administration at UNL in the recruitment and retention of Chicano

students. She reported that MASA tried to volunteer to help the university with recruitment but received little cooperation. Ms. Bahr pointed out how the campus experience for the minority student is made difficult by a societal tendency to lump the life style, background, and numbers of all ethnic minorities into one, the black experience, to the exclusion of the Native American and the Chicano student, when developing programs and support systems on the UNL campus. She said that in Nebraska the Chicano is the majority Latino population. However she reported that the university can only identify approximately 250 Hispanics: 50 percent are Chicanos and the others are from Latin America. She felt that the comingling of Hispanic students distorts the numbers and does not address the Chicano recruitment problems of Nebraska and of higher education. Ms. Bahr explained that the university staff does not know the Chicano experience, nor will they treat the Chicano student as an equal. In her opinion the end result is that, without a strong support system, the Chicano student at UNL drops out because of an experience with racism.

Ms. Bahr reported to the Advisory Committee that DREAM, composed of ethnic minority groups on campus, is educating its membership about the different stereotypes and cultural differences between groups in order to be able to work together and educate the majority student group. She said that a possible goal of DREAM is to model itself after other universities that have organized to prevent racial violence on campus; that DREAM activities will focus on the student as a person, then skin color

becomes secondary.

Joyce Vasquez-Sohl, President, Mexican American Student Association, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Joyce Vasquez-Sohl, president of the Mexican American Student Association (MASA) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), supported the belief that subtle racism does occur at UNL and that many of these incidents involving Chicano students go unreported. MASA represents approximately 25 of the 200 plus students in the Hispanic category identified by the university. Ms. Sohl stated that there could be bias-motivated incidents that occur with other Hispanics on campus that MASA does not hear about. She did not want to restate the type of racially motivated incidents described by the previous speaker but thought that the issue of a Chicano graduate student recruitment program proposed to the chancellor by MASA prompted some positive action pertaining to information on fellowships, application deadlines, etc. She reported that the State of Nebraska legislative body has allocated funds for minority students but the question remains: Do Chicano students, specifically the residents of central and western Nebraska get the information filtered down for actual awards? Ms. Sohl's personal contacts among friends and relatives in western Nebraska indicated they had not received scholarship information, and she feels that the appropriate officials in charge could improve the dissemination of information that would help attract Chicanos to the university.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Donald Burger, Conciliation Specialist, Department of Justice, Community Relations Service

Donald Burger is a conciliation specialist for the Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS), which provides technical assistance in resolving community conflict. In recent years CRS has focused attention on campus conflict.

Mr. Burger reported that from 1981 to May 1989 three bias-motivated incidents on Nebraska's college campuses were reported to CRS. This compares with 36 incidents reported to CRS in the last 3 years in the remaining Federal Region VII States of Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas. He said that some of the campus problems encountered by CRS were recruitment of minority staff and students, admission of students, retention, and the lack of financial assistance for minority students.

Mr. Burger made the point that educational institutions do not initiate systematic efforts to prevent racial hostilities that occur on the campus. He asserted that when bias-motivated incidents do occur the administration has a tendency to keep the issue quiet, with resolution conducted by school personnel. He said little opportunity is afforded the victim to deal with the emotional aspect of the racial incident. UNL has a student legal service that works with some victims of campus violence but primarily it is a legal service that covers a wide range of cases.

ADMINISTRATORS' PERSPECTIVE

Jimmy Smith, Director, Multicultural Affairs Office, University

of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jimmy Smith is the director of the Multicultural Affairs office at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The office is responsible for providing support services to racial minorities and low-income white students at the university. Mr. Smith reported that he has not observed any racism that is directed in a systematic way by the university family, but he notes that there are incidents of prejudice that students encounter. He said that there have been instances where some faculty members have used inappropriate information or information that is not balanced. He reported that his office has followed up on those instances.

Mr. Smith said his office participates in new student orientation, provides counseling to a targeted student population, and assists in recruitment, but primarily, the multicultural affairs office directs its attention to retention issues that face students.

Mr. Smith believe that to serve all minority students on campus and to keep them directed toward educational pursuit, he would need a staff of 12, compared to the 3 persons on staff. Because of limited staff, the focus is on helping students on campus. Mr. Smith related that the staff of the multicultural affairs office understands the population makeup in the State of Nebraska and the psychological impact and stress levels that are created when students and university personnel of different cultures and lifestyles come together on a daily basis to learn

and to interact. He said that minority students are told about institutional procedures, university resources and how to cope with classroom, community and social situations that encompass campus life. Student groups are organized on campus to promote cultural diversity but Mr. Smith believed there is a grave need for faculty involvement in this process. He mentioned that campus violence of past years has diminished, and the control of aggression against minorities is more sophisticated.

Dr. Joe Davis, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Educational Student Services, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Joe Davis, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Educational Student Services, provided information to the Nebraska Advisory Committee on the procedures that the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) uses to orient new students and parents to the concept of a multicultural, ethnically mixed campus environment. In addition, he described the functions of the United Minority Student office, which promotes the interest and leadership development of minority students. He said that the philosophy at UNO is to view racial awareness and sensitivity as an issue to be pursued on a broad front versus a single program approach. According to Dr. Davis, UNO has promoted many programs and workshops on the topic of racial and cultural awareness. He cited a year long racial awareness program for approximately 40 learning center tutors on the professional staff. He related that the Board of Regents has a nondiscriminatory policy that is disseminated and posted throughout the campus. Further that UNO has disciplinary

procedures for staff and faculty that become involved in discriminatory behavior.

Dr. Davis reported that UNO has an affirmative action plan to increase the number of minority students, faculty, and staff at the institution. Minorities represent 12 percent of the Omaha population. According to Dr. Davis the current minority population on campus is 8 percent. His office is responsible for recruitment and retention of students. UNO encourages minority high school students to continue with higher education. Dr. Davis said some of the students are not ready because they lack skills in math or English, which are basic to university course work; however UNO does not provide any kind of remedial work for anyone because it is against the Board of Regents by-laws in the State of Nebraska university system.

Dr. Davis' office, which handles formal discrimination complaints, receives one or two complaints a year. Some complaints he said, are handled informally because the student want the discriminatory behavior stopped immediately. Dr. Davis reported that the chancellor of the university has developed plans for a series of workshop for the coming school year for the university leadership regarding cultural and racial awareness. He said that it is the chancellor's feeling that awareness and being sensitive must come from the top and in doing so it will have a greater impact.

Larry Lindberg, Chair, Counseling and Advisory Division, Metro Community College

Larry Lindberg, chairperson of the Counseling and Advisory Division at Metro Community College in Omaha, stated that at Metro there is very little harassment and racially bigoted behavior. He remembered only one incident in the 5 years he has worked for the community college. Four students complained to Fort Omaha campus counselors that a student, who happened to be a member of the student council, was making sexist and racist comments in a sociology class and the students wanted him sanctioned. The counseling staff decided to turn the complaint into a learning situation for the perpetrator of the incident. The situation was resolved by a positive change in the student's behavior through the counseling process.

Mr. Lindberg said that the administration at Metro Community College has provided positive leadership in promoting cultural diversity on campus. Workshops, a newsletter to employees, and a lecture series on leadership development for students and faculty all have helped develop a positive attitude on campus. He said that complaints by students at Metro Community College are generally made at the counseling center or with the campus manager for each of the three locations.

Dr. James V. Griesen, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

James Griesen stated in his opening remarks that the University of Nebraska does recognize that racism and bigotry is

very much a problem on college campuses, and UNL is no exception. He believes that racism and bigotry exist in virtually all campuses in the United States and it exists in virtually all towns in the United States.

Dr. Griesen reported to the Nebraska Advisory Committee that he has attempted to make staff at the university more sensitive to the feelings of frustration and despair of minority students. He said that if you are aware that other persons feel this way, then you are more likely to be sensitive to their concerns and be responsive to their needs. He related that the university sponsored an Appreciating Cultural Diversity week wherein 11 different workshops were convened. He reported that these workshops covered the entire university setting. Dr. Griesen said he has devoted his monthly professional staff development meetings for the entire year to the issue of appreciating cultural diversity. Students are invited in to discuss their experiences. He said his staff has benefited from these sessions and are more attentive to the sensitivities of minority students.

Dr. Griesen does not feel that the university is racist, but he said that the university recognizes that there are individuals employed who occasionally display racist behavior. He reported that the university deals harshly with anyone who does display any racist practices or activities.

Dr. Griesen presented University of Nebraska statistics that indicated Hispanic enrollment level at 0.9 percent, the Native American enrollment at 0.2 percent, the black enrollment at 1.6

percent, with a three group total of 2.7 percent of the UNL student population contrasted with the census' 5.5 percent reported for the 1980 minority population in the State of Nebraska. Dr. Griesen said he is not pleased with the low number of minority student representation and indicated that the university is working hard to improve the figures. He reported that UNL has increased its efforts to obtain more funding for minority scholarships. He reported that $2 million is available for graduate study and research and UNL officials have agreed to give first priority to attracting minority students. The Nebraska legislature has also passed a bill providing an $800,000 endowment fund for minority scholarships at the UNL and UNO campuses. This fund will be enhanced with private funds in the amount of $200,000, for a total availability of $1 million for minority scholarships.

SUMMARY

The preceding information summarizes the presentation of 10 persons from Nebraska's higher education community and 1 Federal official, who monitors and provides technical assistance on hate crimes in the State. A speech professor suggested that our society needs to learn how to communicate about bigotry and racism. Several presenters believed that the universities need a safe office, where students can report bias-motivated incidents. Students from different ethnic groups mentioned the difficulties of getting through college studies without a strong support system, particularly on a campus where the multicultural student

numbers are low.

College administrators described the different programs, resources, and scholarship monies available for the recruitment and retention of minority students and efforts to recruit minority faculty. According to the presentations, there is important work that needs to be done at all levels of higher education, at 2-year and 4-year campuses, to improve intergroup relations in order to minimize bigotry, racism, and violence in Nebraska's college campuses.